

MONO COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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MINUTES

February 12, 2004
(adopted March 11, 2004)

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Scott Bush, Sally Miller, Steve Shipley, Bill Waite
STAFF PRESENT: Scott Burns, CDD director; Keith Hartstrom, principal planner; Gwen Plummer, associate planner; Denice Hutten, Public Works; Mark Magit, deputy county counsel; C.D. Ritter, commission secretary

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Bill Waite called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No items.
3. **MEETING MINUTES:**
MOTION: Approve minutes of Dec. 11, 2003. (Miller/Bush. Ayes: 3-0. Abstain due to absence: 1. Absent: 1.)
4. **CONSENT AGENDA:** No items.
5. **TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP 37-175/Blackard**
The proposed project would subdivide APN 60-170-06, totaling 1.0 acre, into two residential lots (20,425 and 20,622 square feet). The project is located in the southwest corner of the community of Crowley Lake, on the north side of Juniper Drive. The property is designated Single-Family Residential (SFR 15,000) with a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet in the General Plan. In accordance with Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines, a prior Environmental Impact Report is being used for a project consistent with the General Plan.
Principal Planner Keith Hartstrom reviewed his staff report and showed videos of the Blackard property. Juniper Road is privately maintained. The applicant dedicated 20' right of way to Mono County. A front easement was requested on previous maps. Commissioner Shipley noted that the area is 80% built out, and the road can't get to county standards without crossing people's driveways. It would be virtually impossible to make it a county road, he said.
OPEN PUBLIC HEARING:
Dave Laverty of Triad/Holmes Associates, surveyor of the site, indicated that the property was approved for a lot split 10 years ago. Because no one followed through on the final map, the tentative map expired. He noted that the County has been requiring right-of-way dedications in that area for 25 years. Approximately one-third of the properties in the area have already done so. In this case, the lots are large enough that giving right of way is not a problem. Laverty agreed with Commissioner Shipley that the County will never get all of the right of way for the road unless there is a community-wide action (i.e., an Assessment District). **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING.**
MOTION: Adopt staff recommendation with corrections: 1) p. 1 A. 6. Fish and Game Code ~~711.2~~ 711.4 (c) (2) (B); and 2) p. 7, item 7 (b): ~~Pinon~~ Juniper Drive. (Shipley/Bush. Ayes: 4-0. Absent: 1.)
6. **HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE:** Director Scott Burns presented a PowerPoint on the 1993 housing element focus. The 100-page update will be sent to Planning Commission in the future. Demographic data have been used to review progress based on the 2000 Census. Most of the population resides in Mammoth Lakes, not the unincorporated areas. Wheeler Crest showed the highest growth rate over 10 years, 80%; Mammoth Lakes, 50%; and Mono County, 30%. A jobs/housing imbalance exists,

and housing overpayment occurs. Affordable housing for low- and moderate-income is a growing problem.

DISCUSSION: One commissioner commented that young people are leaving because they can't afford housing, so the population is aging. How can Mono County get professionals to move here, when they can't afford to live here? Ten years ago, it was affordable. But if current residents had to start over, they couldn't do it. The biggest question is how to provide affordable housing to attract people here. Rent has increased, but not in proportion to home prices. As property prices increase, it will squeeze out the bottom sector, and there will be no services to keep the place going. Property is unaffordable at Mono County's median income of \$45,000. The county needs medium-income housing. Mono does not own enough property for housing. Sometimes 25 kids live in an A-frame. Property values are outrageous. Prices in all areas are going through the ceiling. The hospital is trying to buy property to house new doctors who can't afford to live here. The Mammoth Lakes area is growing in construction, but declining in population. The bulk of the community is leaving. If the ski area left, people couldn't survive here. Who's going to replace the middle-income sector?

Community plans call for Rural Residential designation, but the county is running out of land. Ten parcel maps are under way now, 70% in South County. Another commissioner noted that Mammoth Lakes Housing Inc. is trying to house its workers elsewhere, which would perpetuate commuting. How can this be resolved?

Mono County met with Mammoth Lakes and Inyo County recently regarding a grant. Perception in outlying communities is that they're getting dumped on. Yet, residents in these areas mirror what's coming: working in Mammoth Lakes, living elsewhere. It was noted that Lee Vining wants to take care of its own housing needs before becoming a bedroom to Mammoth Lakes.

Nevada's Douglas County is expensive. No more land is available in Tahoe, and golf-course homes are being built in Genoa -- development keeps spilling over. Big houses push little houses out. Crowley Lake Estates supported low- and moderate-income housing. NIMBY attitudes need to change so that people accept housing and industrial uses nearby. Public workshops would help. Two current subdivision applications propose greater density, but need a community water system. Applicants are following what the housing element is promoting. EIRs are under way for both subdivisions. All subdivision projects are looking at water studies.

Natural hazards, such as avalanche, flood and earthquake, limit housing. If government constraints are too tough, housing costs increase. Should Mono County loosen up on density requirements? A development fee study is under way. Development ought to pay for its own impacts, yet the housing element promotes building affordable housing and keeping fees low. It was noted that the market dictates price, not fee payments.

Hartstrom indicated that subdividers are looking at selling land + a house, not just land. Perhaps new development could get some sort of break to build housing, and buyers could actually see more affordable prices (manufactured units still cost \$220,000). There was huge resistance to government interference earlier, but now people acknowledge that that's what it will take (e.g., deed restrictions). There is a lack of multi-family rental housing. Mixed-use designations are there, but density is restricted by lack of infrastructure (i.e., no public water or sewer agencies). June Lake has the best infrastructure, with unused capacity. Long Valley does not have infrastructure to support higher densities. Two projects in Tri-Valley involve 100 lots, with two others proposing 40 lots, but no infrastructure exists there.

No hearings regarding the General Plan update have been held in communities. Although the current focus is on the countywide program, interested communities could get involved. Rezoning was suggested, as large parcels are so restrictive nobody could get in some backyards (e.g., Wheeler Crest). Maybe multi-family housing could be designated in given areas. Property tax is a big consideration. The county could require second units on properties, allow flag lots, and loosen up width/depth standards. People would build granny units if encouraged and they could avoid major hoops. Legislation allows second units now. Deputy County Counsel Mark Magit noted that when someone wants a second unit that complies with state and county regulations, it would be a ministerial act, not discretionary. CC&Rs could still restrict use of property.

How does Mono invite new business to the area? Mining inquiries have come in, but have not been well received.

6. **WORKSHOPS:**

A. HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE: Scott Burns

B. VIDEO: "The Dollars and Sense of Protecting Community Character" by Ed McMahon

7. **REPORTS:** *Continued to next meeting.*

8. **INFORMATIONAL:** Kiewit Pacific Co.'s appeal to Compliance Division.

9. **ADJOURN:** 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, C.D. Ritter, commission secretary